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EVALUATING THE COMPETENCE OF THE EXTENSION WORKER

Situation

There is recognized need for rating each extension worker on the basis of proven ability in his particular job. This is constantly being done either formally or informally as a function of supervision and administration. Some rating forms now in use are based primarily on the evaluation of traits or characteristics. There seems to be general agreement that rating of the individual in terms of the effectiveness of his work would be a more objective approach in establishing a defensible rating.

Objective

To develop a means of appraising the competence of an extension worker on the basis of evidence of the effectiveness of the extension work carried on by him over any given period.

Purpose

1. To furnish a basis for in-service training and guidance.
2. To furnish an opportunity for self-analysis by the individual.
3. To help administrators determine merit for advancement in position and salary.

Procedure

Evidence for evaluating the effectiveness of extension activities may be secured from annual reports, records, interviews, surveys, observations, public attitudes, etc. It is recognized that means for obtaining more authentic evidence need to be developed through studies now being set up or contemplated.

The following form is proposed as a checksheet for determining the effectiveness of the work of county extension agents. Similar forms may be devised to evaluate the effectiveness of State extension workers.

Section I (A and B is in the form we believe to be desirable. Items listed under 1C, II, III and IV are those considered important but statements comparable in form to IA and B are yet to be worked out.)

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1/ Prepared by one Extension workshop group at Chicago Evaluation Workshop, March 1946. Group consisted of H. G. Gould, Asst. Dir. Nebraska; Rae Russell, Ass't State Leader, Washington; Josephine Pollock, Ass't State Leader, Wisconsin; and Cal Svinth, Ass't County Agt. Leader, Washington



I. OBJECTIVE: A WELL PLANNED COUNTY PROGRAM

A. Systematic participation of local people.

Evidence for establishing rating:

(Circle the rating opposite the paragraph which most nearly describes the degree of participation, i.e. - - - - - Good

1. Discussion of problems with individuals (no selection) and/or discussion at farm or home organization meetings on a no-planned procedure basis. - - - - - Poor
2. Discussion of problems with selected individuals - - - - - Fair
3. Discussion of problems and objectives at community and county farm and home organizations on a planned procedure basis. - - - - - Good
4. Discussion of problems and objectives with selected community groups or with selected county project committees. - - - - - Very good
5. Discussion of problems and objectives with selected community groups followed by meetings of county project committees and/or county planning council to consider reports of community groups and determine objectives and plan of action of county program. - - - - - Excellent

B. Based upon an objective analysis of significant problems of the farm, home and communities.

Evidence for establishing rating:

(Circle the rating opposite the paragraph which most nearly describes the degree of problem analysis).

1. Agents judgment based upon facts in mind (without effort to collect all the facts) - - - - - Poor

2. Judgment of agent and representative groups of local leaders without effort to collect all the facts. - - - - - Fair
3. Judgment of agent, a representative group of local leaders, and wise use of professional sources available. - - - - - Good
4. All that (3) implies plus collection and wise use of factual data available from groups or agencies outside of the Extension Service. - - - - - Very good
5. Combined judgment of agent, the people, the specialist (or other professional person) based upon factual data available from all sources outside of Extension, and in addition data collected by the agent and leaders through special surveys, studies, etc. within the county. - - - - - Excellent

C. A well organized plan of action.

In determining ratings, consideration will be given to the following fundamentals which should be included in a well organized plan of action.

1. Clearly defined and practical objectives
2. Balance of objectives in relation to needs
3. Outline of jobs which clearly show how objectives are to be achieved
4. Clearly outlined and practical calendar of work
5. Defines job of agent, specialist, leaders and groups or cooperation agencies
6. Recognizes use of appropriate methods

II. OBJECTIVE: CARRYING OUT THE PROGRAM

A. Follows plan of action

1. Objectives present to people in county
2. Secures, trains, and uses leaders
3. Calendar posted and followed
4. Responsibilities delegated and understood
5. Effective functional organization

B. Covers scope of extension field

1. Geographical distribution
2. Income levels
3. Types of farming
4. Farm family approach
5. Coordinated with other groups and agencies

C. Uses appropriate methods

1. Demonstrations
2. Meetings
3. Home visits
4. Circular letters
5. Bulletins
6. Exhibits
7. Press and radio
8. Visual aids
9. Tours
10. Achievement days

D. WORKING TOWARDS CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AS WELL AS MATERIAL AIMS

1. Health education
2. Citizenship activities
3. Housing and home improvement
4. Recreation
5. Human relationships

III. OBJECTIVE: EVALUATION OF RESULTS TO SHOW PROGRESS IN COUNTY PROGRAM

- A. Comprehensiveness of report as measure of extension program and follow-through on plan of action.
- B. Adequacy of evidence collected to evaluate program as judgment of
  1. Participation
  2. Changes in family
    - a. Attitudes
    - b. Skills
    - c. Information
  3. Summary of records and reports
  4. Results used to
    - a. Re-plan
    - b. Determine effective methods and procedures
    - c. Improve and extend leadership
    - d. Improve public relations



IV. OBJECTIVE: PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT - TO APPRAISE PROGRESS OF AGENT  
IN IMPROVING HIS PROFESSIONAL ABILITY

A. Open minded attitude-favorable to new ideas

B. Breadth of interest as indicated by:

1. General reading (news, professional journals, magazines, and books
2. Membership in and participation in programs of professional organizations
3. Participation in activities outside specific professional groups, as civic cultural

C. Makes effort to be well informed in fields of professional activity as indicated by:

1. Taking advantage of assistance offered by specialists and supervisors
2. Familiarity with Extension studies and other pertinent research and the use of such findings as are applicable to situation in county
3. Participation in studies, initiation of Extension studies if needed in county; calling attention to problems of county that call for research by Experiment station staff, writing case histories
4. Attendance and participation in training meetings, workshops, refresher courses, graduate study
5. Advantage taken of community resources

A. L. Collings





